

150 years of European laws

- These Acts are a sample only. There are hundreds of other Acts dealing with similar topics.
- Many people refer to these Acts as 'legislation that betrays the Treaty of Waitangi'.
- Sometimes these Acts are called 'land grab acts' and 'land sharking'. Maori people said the 1886 Native Lands Administration Act made the Government the greatest land-shark of all.



- In 1840 when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, Maori owned 66,400,000 acres of land. In 1975, when the Waitangi Tribunal was set up Maori owned 3,000,000 acres of land. Today, the land of New Zealand is —
 - 50% owned by the Crown or reserved for public purposes.
 - 47% freehold land under European title.
 - 3% is Maori land, owned by thousands of Maori shareholders.

150 YEARS OF EUROPEAN LAWS

1840 Survey Land Act
All land sales between Maori and European before 1840 have to be checked by a Commissioner. Many of his recommendations are ignored.

1841
All 'waste land', other than that needed for Maori occupation is made Crown land.

1844 Proclamation
Drops Crown's right to pre-emption in land sales.

1844 Native Trusts
Maori education is to help 'civilise' the Maori and make them like European.

1846 Native Lands Purchase
Crown's right of pre-emption is set up again.

1852 Constitution Act
Right to vote is based on property and so most Maori men, who own land communally, are disqualified.

1862 Native Land Act
Sets up Land Court to help put individual owners on Maori land titles. Gets rid of Crown's right of sole buying.

1863 Suppression of Rebellion Act
To punish Maori tribes for rebelling against the Government.

1863 New Zealand Settlement Act
Sets up land confiscations where Maori were said to be in 'rebellion'.

1864 Native Reserves Act
Puts all remaining Maori reserves under Government control to lease out to Europeans at very low rentals.

1865 Native Land Act (cont.)
Land titles are put under names of 10 individual owners, no matter how many owners there are.

1865 Native Land Act
Anyone can apply for a land title which must be heard in a land court. If the Maori doesn't appear, title goes to European.

1867 Maori Representation Act
Sets up the four Maori seats in Parliament.

1879 Peace Preservation Bill
A year's hard labour for Maori who refuse to leave their 'abodes' (aimed at Parihaka ploughmen).

1879 Native Land Act Amendment
Speeds up investigation of title to land. Makes it easier for small European farmers to get land.

1879 Maori Prisoners Trial Act
Parihaka ploughmen to be brought to trial within 30 days of opening of next session of Parliament.

1879 Confiscated Lands Enquiry and Prisoners Trials Act
West Coast land grievances to be checked and trial of Parihaka ploughmen put off for up to 60 days.

1880 Maori Prisoners Act
Says it is not necessary to bring Parihaka ploughmen to trial, just detain them.

1880 West Coast Settlement (North Island) Act
Gives a long list of offences for which any Maori in Taranaki can be arrested without a warrant.

1880 Maori Prisoners Detention Act
Provides for the same law to apply to the Parihaka fencers.

1882 Crown and Native Lands Rating Act
Any Maori land within 5 miles of a highway is liable to rates.

1882 West Coast Peace Preservation Act
Makes indefinite imprisonment without trial for Te Whiti and Tohu.

1886 Native Lands Administration Act
Puts Maori land into hands of small groups of Trustees with the rights of sale.

1887 Native Land Act
Gives direct purchase of Maori land again.

1893 Native Land Purchase and Acquisition Act
Crown sole purchase set up again. Any area of Maori land can be defined as 'suitable for settlement'.

1894 Validation of Invalid Land Sales Act
Unjust deals in the past can now be made legal.

1894 Advances to Settlers Act
Excludes Maori and gives low interest loans to European settlers to buy land from Government.

1898 Old Age Pensions Act
Gives pensions to Europeans but not many Maori qualify as they need proof of their age and are disqualified if they have shares in tribal land.

1904 Maori Land Settlement Act
Maori land is put under Land Councils with no Maori on them, if it is not needed or suitable for occupation by Maori.

1907 Suppression of Tohunga Act
Outlaws the traditional role of the tohunga in Maori society. Tohunga can be put in prison for practising.

1908 Public Works Act
Authorises taking of land for public works and gives owners rights of objection and compensation, but only to Europeans. No notice needed to take Maori land (not until 1974).

1909 Native Land Act
Authorises taking of native land for roads and railways and no compensation to be paid to Maori.

1928 Benefits
Maori get half of what European get.

1930s Depression
Says Maori get half the unemployment benefit given to Europeans.

1932 Petition
Signed by over 30,000 people. Calls for ratification of Treaty of Waitangi. Presented to Parliament but not acted on.

1945 Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act
Efforts are made to return some Maori lands after their leases expire.

1953 Maori Affairs Act
Sets up Maori Affairs Department. Maori Trustee (European) can buy Maori land worth less than £50 without owner's consent.

1967 Maori Affairs Amendment Act
Anyone can now get on to a Trust Board, including Maori (European) Trustee.

1986 State Owned Enterprises Act
Crown land can be sold to private ownership.

1988 Changes to SOEs
Waitangi Tribunal's rulings have to be followed so all the land of the new corporations, such as New Zealand Post, carry a warning about land.